

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 CCO-00 HA-05
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O R 121513Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8253
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3217

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION: JUNE 12, 1978, 1600 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 3160 (DTG 081412Z JUN 78)

1. SUMMARY: ON JUNE 10 ISRAELI COMMANDOS RAIDED A PALESTINIAN
NAVAL BASE AT SARAFAND. UNIFIL COMMANDER EMANUEL ERSKINE SAID
HE FEARED THE ISRAELIS INTENDED TO HAND OVER CONTROL TO
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CHRISTIAN MILITIA OF THE AREAS IN SOUTH LEBANON WHICH THE IDF
WOULD ABANDON. ACCORDING TO AN NAHAR, LEBANON RECEIVED
ASSURANCES THAT ISRAEL WOULD WITHDRAW AS SCHEDULED FROM
SOUTH LEBANON. TWO UNIFIL OBSERVERS MOVED INTO BEAUFORT
CASTLE. INTER-CHRISTIAN CLASHES CONTINUED AS SEVERAL PEOPLE
WERE REPORTED WOUNDED BY A MORTAR ROUND IN THE HILLS OVER-
LOOKING JUNIYAH. THE BODY OF THE LEBANESE TERRORIST KILLED

AT ORLY WAS BROUGHT BACK TO LEBANON FOR BURIAL. END SUMMARY.

2. ISRAELI RAID.

ON JUNE 10 ISRAELI COMMANDOS LANDED AT THE PALESTINIAN BASE AT SARAFAND, SOUTH OF SIDON, DESTROYING SEVERAL BOATS AND HOUSES THERE. YASIR ARAFAT ON JUNE 11 SAID ONLY FOUR FEDAYEEN AND ONE CIVILIAN WERE KILLED IN THE RAID. (THE ISRAELIS ADMITTED THAT TWO OF THEIR OFFICERS HAD BEEN KILLED AND EIGHT OF THEIR SOLDIERS WOUNDED.) ARAFAT ALSO STRONGLY CRITICIZED PRESIDENT CARTER FOR FAILING TO CONDEMN THE RAID WHILE DEPLORING THE EXPULSION IN AN ISRAELI BUS LAST WEEK THAT KILLED FIVE ISRAELIS AND ONE AMERICAN TOURIST.

3. ERSKINE STATEMENT.

UNIFIL COMMANDER EMANUEL ERSKINE TOLD RADIO ISRAEL ON JUNE 10 THAT HE FEARED THE ISRAELIS INTENDED TO HAND OVER TO CHRISTIAN MILITIA THE AREAS IN SOUTH LEBANON FROM WHICH THE IDF WOULD WITHDRAW ON JUNE 13. THE OFFICIAL LEBANESE NEWS AGENCY ON JUNE 11 CARRIED A STATEMENT BY A SPOKESMAN FOR THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL WHO SAID THAT GENERAL ERSKINE'S STATEMENTS "DO NOT REFLECT THE UN'S OPINION ON SOUTH LEBANON."

4. SOUTH LEBANON.

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INDEPENDENT AN NAHAR REPORTED ON JUNE 12 THAT LEBANON HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCES THAT THE FINAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL WOULD TAKE PLACE ON JUNE 13 AS SCHEDULED. LEBANESE OFFICIALS SAID PRIVATELY THAT THE LEBANESE ARMY WOULD MOVE SOUTH SOON AFTER THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, BUT AN NAHAR REPORTED OBSTACLES WERE STILL PREVENTING DEPLOYMENT SOUTH. MEANWHILE, THERE WERE AGAIN ARTILLERY EXCHANGES BETWEEN CHRISTIANS IN THE MARJAYUN AREA AND PALESTINIANS IN THE NABATIYAH AREA ON JUNE 11-12, ACCORDING TO DATT SOURCES.

5. UNIFIL OBSERVERS AT BEAUFORT.

TWO UNIFIL OBSERVERS WERE ALLOWED TO MOVE INTO BEAUFORT CASTLE ON JUNE 11, ACCORDING TO PRESS AND OTHER SOURCES. PALESTINIANS AND LEBANESE LEFTISTS REMAIN IN CONTROL OF THE CASTLE, HOWEVER.

6. INTER-CHRISTIAN CLASHES CONTINUE.

A. CLASHES AMONG COMPETING CHRISTIAN FACTIONS ARE CONTINUING. ON JUNE 9 UNKNOWN GUNMEN SHOT DEAD JOSEPH ABU SAAD, HEAD OF THE NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY'S OFFICE IN SAFRA, NORTH LEBANON.

SAAD WAS KILLED IN THE SEASIDE TOWN OF RABIYAH, WHERE HIS FIRENDS BURNED TIRES AND STOPPED TRAFFIC ALONG THE COAST ROAD FOR SEVERAL HOURS AFTER THE ASSASSINATION. A UNIT OF THE LEBANESE ARMY REOPENED THE ROAD.

B. ON JUNE 10 MOST PAPERS REPORTED THAT SYRIAN ADF FORCES WOULD TAKE CHARGE OF SECURITY AT THE SHIKKA CEMENT PLANT, WHICH HAS BEEN CLOSED BY A STRIKE FOR THE PAST WO WEEKS AS A RESULT OF CLASHES IN THE AREA BETWEEN SUPPORTERS OF FORMER PRESIDENT SULAYMAN FRANJIYAH AND MEMBERS OF THE PHALANGE PARTY. AT ONE POINT FIVE MEN WERE KILLED IN A GUN BATTLE IN THE FACTORY'S MESS HALL.

C. ON JUNE 11, ACCORDING TO PHALANGIST VOICE OF LEBANON, ONE
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ROUND OF MORTAR FIRE WOUNDED SEVERAL PEOPLE IN GHAZIR IN THE HILLS OVERLOOKING JUNIYAH. THE RADIO DID NOT SAY WHO FIRED THE ROUND.

7. AWADAH'S BODY BROUGHT BACK.

A. THE BODY OF MAHMUD AWADAH, THE LEBANESE KILLED IN LAST MONTH'S ATTACK AT ORLY AIRPORT, WAS BROUGHT BACK TO LEBANON FOR BURIAL ON JUNE 8. AWADAH WAS A MEMBER OF THE ARAB SOCIALIST ACTION PARTY, THE LEBANESE BRANCH OF GEORGE HABBASH'S PFLP. THE LONDON-BASED PUBLICATION AL MANAR REPORTED LAST WEEK THAT AWADAH WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ASSASSINATION OF AMBASSADOR MELOY, BUT AN NAHAR ON JUNE 9 QUOTED THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR AS SAYING THIS HAD NOT BEEN CONFIRMED.

B. ARRIVAL OF BODY AT BEIRUT AIRPORT WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DEMONSTRATIONS IN CORNICHE NAZRAA AREA THAT INCLUDED SHOOTING IN AIR AND SOME EXPLOSIONS. FRENCH MILATT TOLD DATT THAT FRENCH EMBASSY HAD RECEIVED THREAT THAT DAY, BUT THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS HOWEVER SOME OF THE CORNICHE MAZRAA SHOOTING TOOK PLACE NEAR THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE.
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